

March 1, 2004

*Presenting
the*

PSU New Music Ensemble

Reena Berger, piano
Joanne Britz, clarinet
Steven Elisha, cello
Selim Giray, violin
Brian Woods, tenor

John C. Ross, conductor

Waltz (1991)

**John C. Ross
(b. 1962)**

special guests
Paul Carlson, violin
Susan Marchant, piano

Sonata for Cello and Piano (1915)

**Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)**

*Prologue
Sérénade et Final*

*A reading of Tony Hoagland's "The Word"
by Rebekah Grieb*

The Word (2003)

John C. Ross

*A reading of William Shakespeare's Sonnet 97
by Rebekah Grieb*

Sonnet 97 (2003)

John C. Ross

Final Passage (2003)

John C. Ross

The Word

Down near the bottom
of the crossed-out list
of things you have to do today,

between "green thread"
and "broccoli," you find
that you have penciled "sunlight."

Resting on the page, the word
is beautiful. It touches you
as if you had a friend

and sunlight were a present
he had sent from someplace distant
as this morning—to cheer you up,

and to remind you that,
among your duties, pleasure
is a thing

that also needs accomplishing.
Do you remember?
that time and light are kinds

of love, and love
is no less practical
than a coffee grinder

or a safe spare tire?
Tomorrow you may be utterly
without a clue,

but today you get a telegram
from the heart in exile,
proclaiming that the kingdom

still exists,
the king and queen alive,
still speaking to their children,

--to any one among them
who can find the time
to sit out in the sun and listen.

Sonnet 97

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt! what dark days seen!
What old December's bareness, everywhere!
And yet this time remov'd was summer's time;
The teeming autumn, rich with big increase,
Bearing the wanton burden of the prime,
Like widow'd wombs after their lord's decease:
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me
But hope of orphans and unfather'd fruit;
For summer and his pleasure wait on thee,
And thou away the very birds are mute;
Or, if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer,
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

William Shakespeare

**About the
PSU New Music Ensemble**

One frustration that both composers and performers sometimes share is the phenomenon of the single performance. After working on a concert of music for weeks or months, investing numerous hours in rehearsal, the concert comes . . . and goes. There is one chance to present the music to the public and then it's on to the next thing. Well, if the music is worth presenting, then it's worth presenting again, perhaps to a different audience. Therefore, the purpose of this ensemble is two-fold. First, it is a vehicle for chamber music performance among the music department faculty, in which colleagues can experience multiple performances of the same music, growing together as an ensemble while growing into the music. The ensemble's second purpose is to go out on short performance tours, both in-state and out-of-state whose mission is to spread the word about the PSU Music Department and to recruit talented high school students to study at PSU.

The music that the ensemble plays will be a mixture of new music—some of it composed by me—and classic chamber pieces. The PSU New Music Ensemble will be a platform for showing off the music department's performance and composition faculty.

Tonight's concert is our first. Next year there will be others in the area. Although currently a work-in-progress, it is my hope that we will become a fixture in the musical landscape of Southeast Kansas and beyond.

John C. Ross

Special thanks to PSU theatre student Rebekah Grieb for tonight's readings, and to Professor Emeritus Dr. Paul Carlson and Dr. Susan Marchant for their goodwill and for simply helping out.